

PPM 501

REFERRAL SERVICES

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GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

501.01 PURPOSE OF REFERRAL SERVICES

The purpose of vocational rehabilitation program referral services is to enable state Vocational Rehabilitation Program applicants and eligible individuals to obtain needed vocational and other services, assistance, and supports from appropriate resources.

501.02 NATURE AND SCOPE OF REFERRAL SERVICES

(1) As appropriate to the vocational rehabilitation needs of each individual and consistent with each individual's informed choice, the assigned Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor must assist applicants and eligible individuals with securing needed services from other federal, state, and local agencies and programs. Referral must be made, as appropriate:

(A) especially to the Social Security Administration for eligibility determination for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits;

[REQUIRED PRACTICE. In the case of Social Security benefits, referral of appropriate individuals who are not current Social Security SSDI beneficiaries and/or SSI-DB or SSI-DI recipients to the Social Security Administration must be made at the earliest possible opportunity since, if such individuals are determined to be eligible for Social Security benefits, only that portion of the cost of the individual's vocational rehabilitation services incurred after the individual has been determined to be an eligible beneficiary or recipient are reimbursable to the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program.]

(B) to other appropriate federal and state programs providing services needed for individuals to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment, including, but not limited to, other components of the statewide workforce investment system;

(C) to the Client Assistance Program (CAP); and

(D) to other federal, state, and local government programs and social services organizations providing temporary shelter and housing assistance, utility assistance, food stamps and food and clothing assistance, legal aid, and mental health, alcohol, and drug abuse services.

(2) The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor must refer to local providers of non-integrated employment services any individual with a disability who makes an informed choice to pursue non-integrated work, except that, prior to making the referral required by this paragraph, the Counselor must:

(A) explain to the individual or, as applicable, the individual's representative that the purpose of the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program is to help individuals achieve employment outcomes in integrated settings, and that Vocational Rehabilitation Program services can only be made available to eligible program participants seeking employment outcomes in integrated settings;

(B) provide the individual with information concerning the availability of employment options and vocational rehabilitation services in integrated settings;

(C) inform the individual that services can be provided by the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program in an extended non-integrated setting only if necessary for training or other services required to transition the individual from work in a non-integrated setting into competitive employment in an integrated setting;

(D) inform the individual that, if he or she chooses not to pursue employment in an integrated setting, he or she can seek services from the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program at a later date, if, at that time, he or she chooses to pursue employment in an integrated setting; and

(E) refer the individual, as appropriate, to Social Security Administration Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) representatives for information concerning work incentive programs and the ability of individuals with disabilities to work while receiving Social Security benefits.

(3) The information and referral services described in this chapter must be made available to all applicants and eligible individuals, including any eligible individuals who are not in the priority category or categories receiving other vocational rehabilitation services under an order of selection procedure, if the state Vocational Rehabilitation Program is operating under an order of selection as described PPM chapter 430.

501.03 ACCOMMODATIONS

All information described in section 501.02 of this chapter must be provided in the language, alternative format, or appropriate mode of communication of the individual's informed choice.

501.04 COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS EXEMPTION

Vocational rehabilitation referral services are exempt from the comparable services and benefits requirements applicable to other services, and the provision of referral services cannot be conditioned on a prior determination that comparable services and benefits are unavailable under any other program.

501.05 FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION EXEMPTION

No financial participation requirement may be imposed as a condition for the provision of referral services for any applicant or eligible individual.

501.06 SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR REFERRAL

In making the referrals described in section 501.02 of this chapter, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor must:

- (1) refer the individual to the federal, state, and local programs best suited to address the specific employment and other needs of the individual; and
- (2) provide the individual referred with—
 - (A) written notice of the referral to the other program,
 - (B) information identifying a specific point of contact within the other program to which the individual is being referred, and
 - (C) information and advice regarding the most suitable services needed to assist the individual in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment.

RECORD OF SERVICES DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**500.07 RECORD OF SERVICES CONTENT REQUIREMENTS**

The record of services for each individual must document each referral made consistent with the requirements described in this chapter.

500.08 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM COMPLIANCE

All required information, data, and documents must be incorporated and maintained in the record of services for the individual in a manner consistent with Indiana Rehabilitation Information System (IRIS) requirements.

[AUTHORITY: Federal regulations 34 CFR 361.37; 361.48(d).]

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